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**A BOOK OF
EPIGRAMS**

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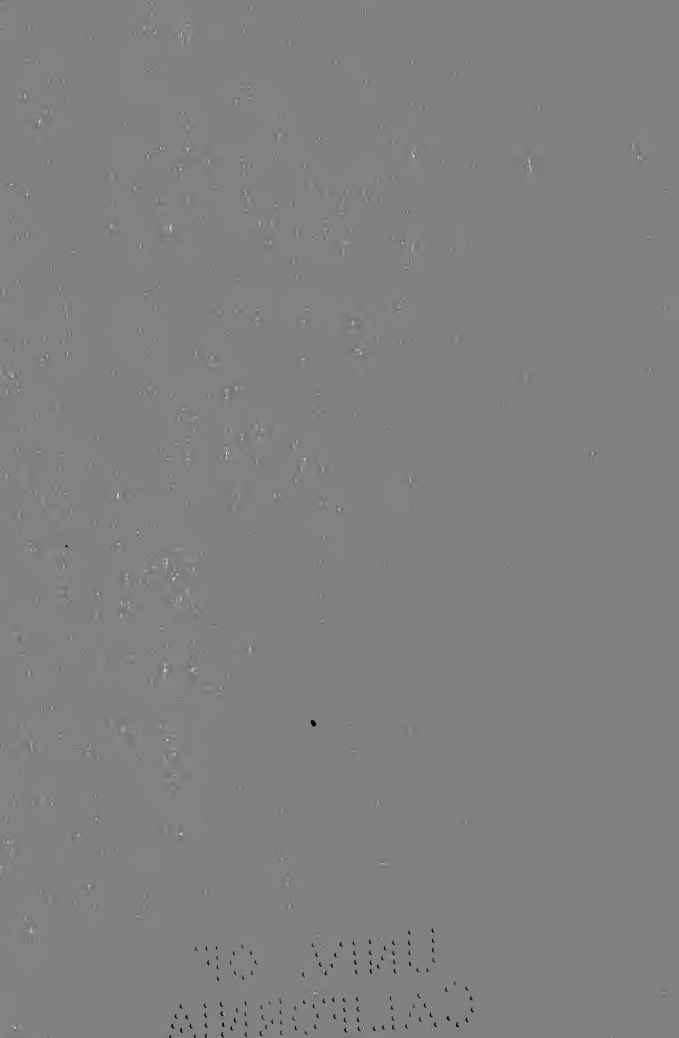
A BOOK OF
EPIGRAMS

GATHERED BY

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EVANSTON
WILLIAM S. LORD
1902





EPIGRAMS

POETRY

She comes like the hushed beauty of the
night,

But sees too deep for laughter ;
Her touch is a vibration and a light
From worlds before and after.

[Charles E. Markham

POETRY

Poetry? Can I define it, you inquire?

Yes ; by your pleasure ,

Poetry is Thought, in princeliest attire ,
Treading a measure.

[Duffield Osborne

THE YEAR'S MINSTRELSY

Spring, the low prelude of a lordlier song;
Summer, a music without hint of
death :

Autumn, a cadence lingeringly long :
Winter, a pause;—the Minstrel-Year
takes breath.

[William Watson

THE SUN

All the World's bravery that delights our
eyes,
Is but thy several liveries ;
Thou the rich dye on them bestows't,
Thy nimble Pencil paints this landscape
as thou go'st.

[Abraham Cowley

FAREWELL

I strove with none, for none was worth
my strife.

Nature I loved, and next to nature, art.
I warm'd both hands before the fire of
life:

It sinks; and I am ready to depart.

[Walter Savage Landor

LIFE

As a shaft that is sped from a bow unseen
to an unseen mark,

As a bird that gleams in the firelight, and
hurries from dark to dark,

As the face of the stranger who smiled as
we passed in the crowded street,—

Our life is a glimmer, a flutter, a memory,
fading, yet sweet!

[William Cranston Lawton

EPICRAM ON THE DEATH OF EDWARD FORBES.

Nature, a jealous mistress, laid him low.
He woo'd and won her; and, by love
made bold,
She showed him more than mortal man
should know,
Then slew him lest her secret should
be told.

[Sydney Dobell

ON LONGFELLOW'S DEATH

No puissant singer he, whose silence
grieves
To-day the great West's tender heart
and strong;
No singer vast of voice: yet one who
leaves
His native air the sweeter for his song.

[William Watson

DANIEL WEBSTER

We have no high cathedral for his rest,
Dim with proud banners and the dust
of years ;
All we can give him is New England's
breast
To lay his head on—and his country's
tears.

[Thomas William Parsons

EUGENE FIELD

Fades his calm face beyond our mortal ken,
Lost in the light of lovelier realms
above ;
He left sweet memories in the hearts of
men
And climbed to God on little children's
love.

[Frank L. Stanton

THE DEBTOR CHRIST

Quid Mihi Et Tibi

What, woman, is my debt to thee,
That I should not deny
The boon thou dost demand of me?
“I gave thee power to die.”

[John B. Tabb

TWO SPIRITS

A spirit above and a spirit below,
A spirit of joy and a spirit of woe;
The spirit above is the spirit divine,
The spirit below is the spirit of wine.

[Anonymous

ON A SUN-DIAL

With warning hand I mark Time's rapid
flight
From life's glad morning to its solemn
night ;
Yet , through the dear God's love, I also
show
There's Light above me by the Shade
below.

[John Greenleaf Whittier

BORROWING

From the French

Some of your hurts you have cured ,
And the sharpest you still have survived ,
But what torments of grief you endured
From evils which never arrived !

[Ralph Waldo Emerson

YOUTH

The Tear , down Childhood's cheek that
flows ,

Is like the dew-drop on the Rose ;

When next the Summer breeze comes by ,

And waves the bush , the Flower is dry.

[Sir Walter Scott

MY TROUBLES

I wrote down my troubles every day ;

And after a few short years ,

When I turned to the heartaches passed
away ,

I read them with smiles , not tears.

[John Boyle O'Reilly

SENSIBILITY

The soul of Music slumbers in the shell ,
Till waked and kindled by the Master's
spell ;

And feeling Hearts—touch them but
lightly—pour

A thousand melodies unheard before !

[Samuel Rogers

IS LOVE SO BLIND

The records of ancient times declare

That hapless Love is blind ,

Yet many's the virtue, sweet and rare,

That only Love can find.

[Henry W. Allport

SYMPATHY

What gem hath dropp'd and sparkles o'er
his chain ?

The Tear most sacred, shed for other's
pain,

That starts at once—bright—pure—from
Pity's mine,

Already polish'd by the Hand Divine.

[Lord Byron

GRIEF

What cannot be preserved when Fortune
takes,

Patience her injury a mockery makes.

The robb'd, that smiles, steals something
from the Thief;

He robs himself, that spend a bootless
Grief.

[William Shakespeare

OPPORTUNITY

It is a hag whom Life denies his kiss
As he rides questward in knight-errant
wise ;
Only when he hath passed her is it his
To know too late the Fairy in disguise.
[Madison Cawein]

COMPETITION

The race is won ! As victor I am hailed
With deafening cheers from eager
throats ; and yet
Gladder the victory could I forget
The strained , white faces of the men who
failed.

[Julia Shayer]

SLANDER

Oh ! many a shaft , at random sent ,
Finds mark the archer little meant ;
And many a Word , at random spoken ,
May soothe or wound a Heart that's
broken.

[Sir Walter Scott

VICE

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien ,
As to be hated needs but to be seen ;
Yet seen too oft , familiar with her face ,
We first endure, then pity , then embrace.

[Alexander Pope

TALKING

Words learn'd by rote , a Parrot may
rehearse ,

But talking is not always to converse ;
Not more distinct from Harmony divine ,
The constant creaking of a Country Sign.

[William Cowper

THINKERS, PAST AND PRESENT

God , by the earlier sceptic , was exiled ;
The later is more lenient grown and mild:
He sanctions God , provided you agree
To any other other name for deity.

[William Watson

THE COOK WELL DONE

Why call me a bloodthirsty , gluttonous
sinner

For pounding my chef when my peace
he subverts ?

If I can't thrash my cook when he gets a
poor dinner ,

Pray how shall the scamp ever get his
desserts ?

[Martial

“U” AND “I”

The difference between you and me

Is this , dear—more's the pity —

You're summering in the mountains ,

I'm simmering in the city !

[Ogden Ward

THE FIVE DOUBLE U'S

Winsomeness , wardrobe , words of elo-
quence ,

Wisdom , and wealth , bring men to con-
sequence.

That's something which a man in vain
pursues

Who is not blest with these five w's.*

[*From the Sanskrit* (Tr. by Chas. R. Lanman)]

WEALTH

Can wealth give Happiness ? look round ,
and see

What gay distress ! what splendid misery !

Whatever Fortune lavishly can pour ,

The mind annihilates , and calls for more.

[Edward Young]

*The Sanskrit word for each of these five things begins with w.

EQUITY—?

The meanest man I ever saw
Allus kep' inside o' the law ;
And ten-times better fellers I've knowed
The blame gran'-jury's sent over the road.

[James Whitcomb Riley]

A WHOLLY UNSCHOLASTIC OPINION

Plain hoss-sense in poetry-writin'
Would jest knock sentiment a-kitin'!
Mostly poets is all star-gazing'
And moanin'and groanin'and paraphrasin'!

[James Whitcomb Riley]

GOLDEN ROD

It is the twilight of the year
And through her wondrous wide abode
The autumn goes , all silently ,
To light her lamps along the road.

[Charles Hanson Towne

GRACE

Thou canst not move thy staff in air ,
Or dip thy paddle in the lake ,
But it carves the bow of beauty there ,
And the ripples in rhyme the oar for-
sake.

[Ralph Waldo Emerson

FROM THE FRENCH

Says Marmontel , The secret's mine
Of Racine's art-of-verse divine.
To do thee justice , Marmontel ,
Never was secret kept so well.

[William Watson

TWO POETS

A peacock's-tail-like splendour hath this
 Muse ,
With eyes that see not throng'd, and gorgeous hues.
The swan's white grace that other wears
 instead ,
Stately with stem-like throat and flower-like head.

[William Watson

TOMORROW

'Tis so far fetch'd, this morrow, that I fear
'Twill be both very old and very dear.
Tomorrow I will live, the fool doth say,
Why e'en to-day's too late, the wise lived
yesterday.

[Anonymous

QUATRAIN

Fear not the menace of the By-and-by;
To-day is ours, tomorrow Fate must give;
Stretch out your hands and eat, although
ye die—
Better to die than never once to live.

[Richard Hovey

ON MODERN STATESMEN

Midas, they say, possess'd the art of old,
Of turning whatso'er he touch'd to gold.
This modern statesmen can reverse with
ease;

Touch them with gold, they'll turn to
what you please.

[Anonymous

ON FOLLY

The world of fools has such a store ,
That he who would not see an ass
Must bide at home and bolt his door ,
And break his looking-glass.

[From the French of La Monnoye

ON THE ENBANKMENT

The impassive stony Sphinx kissed by the
 amorous moon ;
The little coster-girl , a Covent Garden
 rose ;
Three thousand years apart ! And yet
 alike for once in this—
Tonight , each has a secret she will not
 disclose.

[William Theodore Peters

LOVE

That happy minglement of Hearts ,
 Where , changed as chemic compounds
 are,
Each with its own Existence parts ,
 To find a new one , happier far !

[Thomas Moore

LOVE

A mighty Pain to Love it is ,
And 'tis a Pain that Pain to miss ;
But of all Pains , the greatest Pain
It is to Love , and Love in vain.

[Abraham Cowley

ON WOMEN AND HYMEN

Whether tall men, or short men, are best,
Or bold men, or modest and shy men,
I can't say , but I this can protest ,
All the fair are in favour of Hy-men.

[Anonymous

PETER AND HIS WIFE

After such years of dissension and strife,
Some wonder that Peter should weep for
his wife ;

But his tears on her grave are nothing
surprising,—

He's laying her dust, for fear of its rising.

[Thomas Hood

WHICH WAY DID HE GO?

(An Obituary)

His earthly warfare now is o'er

And closed his life sublime ;

From this cold world he vanished for

A brighter , warmer clime.

[Frank L. Stanton

WAR'S GLORIOUS ART

One to destroy is murder by the law,
And gibbets keep the lifted hand in awe:
To murder thousands takes a spacious
name ,
War's Glorious art , and gives immortal
Fame.

[Edward Young

ETERNITY

The One remains , the many change and
pass ;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's
shadows fly ;
Life , like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity.
[Percy Bysshe Shelly

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